



**SEIUHealthcare.**  
United for Quality Care

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Leslie Bumpus, Dentist, DOC  
MPH Candidate

Hebron  
SEIU District 1199 New England  
Before the Appropriations Committee

***In Support of* HR 11 and SR 12: RESOLUTION PROPOSING APPROVAL OF AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT AND THE STATE EMPLOYEES BARGAINING AGENT COALITION (SEBAC)**

Good Morning Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Committee, my name is Dr. Leslie Bumpus and I am a dentist with the Department of Corrections. I consistently cover at least 2-3 facilities at a time, like many other dentists. We treat infection, diagnose and treat disease, as well as educate patients on oral health and disease prevention to achieve a better quality of life. I am here today to speak in support of House Resolution 11 and Senate Resolution 12.

Passing the SEBAC contract is about more than just state workers. You heard me mention covering 2-3 facilities like many other dentists in DOC. This is due to poor recruitment/retention efforts, low pay, and years of no raises. It can be really hard to recruit the workers that we need to fix the staffing crisis. And while this is detrimental to us, it is worse for our patients. We have clients waiting on the dental list for years because we never have enough dental staff. We are constantly putting out fires by extracting infected and painful teeth instead of being able to proactively clean and maintain oral health in our patients. Imagine this were you, or your kids, or your parents that could have had their teeth saved, but now they're in excruciating pain and the only option is tooth removal. It has been beyond difficult for the treating dental staff, as well as the patients we care for.

This contract would give state workers reasonable pay and the wage increase would help to relieve the financial burden on many people, recruit and retain dental staff and others, as well as boost morale because it will show that we are appreciated. Personally, this contract will help me pay back my astronomical student loans. We receive very low pay as dentists working for the state of Connecticut (bottom 25th percentile according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics), and my husband and I both got our hours cut during the pandemic.

Even though the narrative would have you think that state workers are grossly overpaid and are rich, many state workers live paycheck to paycheck like most other people. We would greatly benefit from a raise since we've gone six years without them. This contract is a start towards the recruitment and retention of new state workers that is so badly needed so we can expand services and save lives.

Thank you for your time.